



NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 1990

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

From the Editor	Page 1
Letter to the Editor	Page 2
"The Whirlwind Campaign"	Page 4
Education of Upper Level Graduates in the Fraser Valley	Page 7
P.D. Report	Page 8
Excerpt of letter from John Potts	Page 9
President's Report	Page 11
From the Contract Chair	Page 13
FSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:	
Executive positions to be filled	Page 16
Nomination Form	Page 17
Duties of Officers	Page 18
Resolutions to be presented at AGM	Page 20
Report from 1st Faculty Vice-President	Page 20
Report on the Associate Degree Workshop	Page 22
Report from Agreements Chair	Page 24
Fifteen Years of Faculty and Staff Association	Page 25

FSA Executive 1989/90

President	Bob Smith	2421/4313
First Faculty Vice-President	Doug Hudson	4325
Second Faculty Vice-President ...	Brian Coulter	4317
First Staff Vice-President	Leslie Wood	4223
Second Staff Vice-President	Bertha Solvey	2445/2475
Treasurer	Cheryl Isaac	4262
Recording Secretary	Jocelyn Cass	4313
Grievance Chair	Dave Allen	2456
Grievance Vice-Chair	Mary Saunders	4224
Communications Chair	Graham Dowden	4293
Job Classification Audit Chair ..	Varlene MacLeod	4251
Professional Development Chair ..	Wendy Burton	2422
Contract Chair	Ian McAskill	4299
Agreements Chair	Betty Harris	4272
Past President	Kevin Busswood	2436

Executive Meeting Schedule

Abbotsford, Room A306, 3:30 p.m. (Week 1)

April 25
May 23

FSA NEWSLETTER

April, 1990

From the Editor . . .

A HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS, or ASK NOT WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR CIEA, BUT WHAT CIEA CAN DO FOR YOU....

Can you believe those buggers at Douglas? Must have been nasty being out on strike like that, but look at the settlement they got! Fifty-six thou at the top of the scale! Finally, somebody with the balls to stick it to those Socreds, after all these years. I'll bet they're glad they're not hooked into co-ordinated bargaining right now!

And listen to that negotiating team of ours this year! PARITY WITH DOUGLAS! WHY SETTLE FOR LESS! FOURTEEN PER CENT RIGHT DOWN THE LINE!

Damn rights! It's about time! This is our year to kick butt! No more Mr. Nice Guy. This is the year it ends. The year we tell CIEA they won't have FVC to kick around any more. All right, all right, make allowance for a bit of hype. But for once, we've got a rock steady bottom line. The middle of the pack! The College has been talking about it long enough, now let them eat it!

.....

Wow, look at this meeting! I've never seen so many people in this room. Who's that they've got sitting up at the front, is that the executive? That's a switch. Looks good, looks good.

The guy's turning on the overheads. Here we go! He looks solid. He looks confident. Heeeeeeeere's Johnny . . . ! Let's hope we don't spend hours going through all that boring shit. Let's see some numbers. Let's

get those faculty numbers right up there on that screen! Hey, there they are, right off the bat! Let's see, what's that number? What is that? What the hell is that? That can't be right. Say something, fella. Talk to me. Say it isn't so.

Holy shit, it is so. This guy is saying seven. Seven?? Seven and a half? Seven and a half this year and seven the next? I thought we were going for fourteen. Or at least ten. Where the hell is seven and a half going to get us, I'd like to know. Listen. He's talking about that. He says seven and a half will put us . . . right . . . back . . . near . . . the . . . bottom . . . of . . . the . . . heap. Bloody hell. Bloody hell!

Now what is he saying? There's more. He's saying there's more? He says we did well on benefits. The college will pay 75% of premiums next year and 90% the year after. Jeez, haven't some places got 100% already? What else? They're going to give us vision care? And stump socks. Stump socks?

God, what does the executive say about this? They look funny up there. They've got funny looks on their faces. Oh, somebody else is going to talk. The executive is going to give us their motion. They think the salary offer sucks. They want us to reject it. Whew.

But why is that big guy doing all the talking? What does the first guy think?

Oh.

.....
The College hasn't got any more money. This is the best they can do.

.....
Aw. heck.

I was sure they had enough money this year. Everybody said so. They didn't have enough last year, I know that, or the year before. But I was sure they had it this time. Now it turns out they don't. What the hell is wrong with this place?

Of course, there is the new ed. leave thing. I know some colleges had ed. leave fifteen years ago, but hey, better late than never! And there's those stump socks.

Besides, listen to that staff guy. He thinks we're going to shaft him. What if he's right? If we reject this package and have to start all over again, what if the College does offer us nine and the staff five? What'll we do then?

And listen to that faculty member saying what good work-loads we've got, and maybe if we ask for more money the College will make us teach more sections again like they did that other time.

People are starting to argue now. I hate this part. Everything just gets confused. Nobody knows what to do. What the hell, let's just get it over with. This contract isn't so bad. And anyway, what is this mediation they're talking about? What if it backfires? Maybe we'll wind up worse off the longer we wait. And would you go on strike for a few hundred bucks? I've got my family to think of. Do you have any idea what my mortgage payments are every month? Besides. Besides. It's a secret ballot.

.....
I hear the Vocational Instructors at VCC might hit the bricks. More power to them. Me, I'm voting acceptance. This is a nice place. Excellent scenery. Mild climate. Good collegial atmosphere. We could do worse.

Graham Dowden

Letter to the Editor . . .

Dear Editor:

At the recent FSA General Meeting, some staff were indignant that negotiators might possibly consider a higher percentage wage hike for faculty than for staff.

But no one objected to staff betraying faculty on vacations: staff accepted a several percent

increase in vacations and left faculty with a 0% increase!

Is that a silly comparison? Of course!

It is silly to assume that just because a proposal can be expressed in a percentage, then the increase ought to be the

same for all employees. If staff vacations are 10% below their comparable group and faculty vacations are at parity, and it takes 10% for staff to catch up and 0% for faculty to maintain parity, then the percentage difference is not relevant.

Otherwise, staff could stay at the bottom forever while faculty maintain parity.

And the same is true of salaries.

We should have given the boss's proposals and negotiating strategy as much scrutiny as we did each other. Macho negotiating by the boss seems to have abated; we have not recently been faced with stupid proposals designed only to make the boss look hard.

Instead, we have voted on proposals that are not too far from reasonable settlements. And we accepted them; we accepted unreasonable settlements. This year 10% in the first year would have been reasonable; we should have gotten more, but 10% would have been reasonable. Instead we accepted 7.5%. The pattern has been similar in recent years. The boss has learned well how to pitch the proposal where we will

not have quite enough courage to swat it back.

The result is that faculty, at least, will soon be close to the bottom of salary scales in B.C. colleges.

In the next negotiations, faculty and staff units should each negotiate and vote on the basis of what is reasonable for each unit, not on the basis of comparisons between the units.

When we commence the next set of negotiations, the FSA should inform the other side that we will continue to negotiate a blended agreement, but that faculty and staff will vote separately on contract proposals. Hence, it is possible that faculty will accept and staff will reject a settlement proposal.

The FSA should hold separate faculty and staff meetings to vote on contract proposals. Thus, instead of being distracted by whether faculty or staff are getting the better deal, each unit can concentrate on whether it is getting a fair deal from the boss.

Paul Herman

Editor's Note . . .

The accompanying article ("The Whirlwind Campaign") was commissioned by the FSA Newsletter in the wake of the Advanced Education Ministry's decision to go ahead with a university in Prince George, at who knows what cost to any expansion of opportunities in the Fraser Valley. The author, John Harris, has taught English at the College of New Caledonia in Prince George since 1972, during which time the academic offerings at the College have shrunk into virtual nonexistence. Harris is also the author of Small Rain, a collection of stories that will ensure literary immortality for that underexposed specimen known as the British Columbia college instructor. Small Rain is available in the FVC library.

THE WHIRLWIND CAMPAIGN . . . (a lesson in politics)

By 1987, Prince George was getting desperate. The recession of the early eighties, long-forgotten on the lower mainland, was still on in the north. Of long-promised developments, among them Site C, Alcan Expansion, a steel mill and a meat-packing plant, the town got a White Spot. Worse, what was tried, failed: a chopstick factory and a CADCAM centre. No more "silicon valley of the north." The mayor's idea of a convention centre was voted down by ratepayers who wanted a new hockey arena.

So the people who do this sort of thing came up with the idea of a university. It was a long shot, and it went against the grain. Prince George, in the seventies, thoroughly killed the idea of the college offering some degree programs. What the north wanted was more career diplomas and maybe a poly-technic. It certainly did not want French, Spanish, theatre, music, art, creative writing, political science and the leftists and perverts who taught them.

But the real attraction of the idea was that it would be senior government and not local money at risk, and it was about time the north got a fair slice of the public pie. Besides, there seemed to be a market. Local kids were scrambling to get into the university transfer program at CNC, no matter how much was cut out of it. Most of the new career programs were empty.

So they set up a society which sold \$50 voting memberships to some 300 prominent citizens and \$5 associate memberships to some 25,000 voters (which is about a quarter of the voting population

in the north) and they started to lobby. They got \$100,000 off the provincial government and drew up a plan (the Dahllof Report) that gave something to everyone. Dahllof was pure fantasy, but good politics. The main campus (with a medical school) would be in downtown Prince George (which is "decaying") but there would be a grad school in every major town in the north: agriculture in Vanderhoof, forestry in Terrace, marine biology in Rupert, education in Quesnel, etc. To keep the cost of all this down, innovative teaching methods would be employed. There would be compacted five-week semesters, a mostly temporary faculty hired from industry (what does a degree mean compared to real experience?), OLA packages for the basic arts courses, lots of satellite conference call, and self-paced instruction, and credit for life experience.

Some of the society executive went to Sweden to have a first-hand look at the Dahllof model. It looked great. There were happy Swedes everywhere and, after all, Swedes are northerners too. Every city council, school and college board, and chamber of commerce in the north came on side. It became political if not personal suicide to go against the idea or question even a single detail in the report. Soon the Socreds and NDP were stumbling over one another to say that they got the idea first and supported it best.

Then the government came up with the university-college idea and offered it to Kelowna, Kamloops and Prince George. People were indignant. CNC board, under the leadership of Principal Charles

McCaffray (a founding father of the University Society) killed this tactic by rejecting the idea and the seven million dollar building program that went with it. CNC faculty were understandably upset but said nothing at the time. However, when Kelowna and Kamloops got started (Sept. '89) and were offering degree programs in some half-dozen areas, CNC faculty turned traitor. They bought ads in the paper and went on T.V. and attacked the Dahllof Swedish network university idea as ridiculous and published figures to show that it would cost more to build and operate than the Harvard Medical School. They questioned the idea that students might want freshly-minted northern degrees rather than fusty ones from SFU, UVic or UBC, and the idea that high-quality faculty could be hired on a temporary basis. They repeated the government's message that the university college could start up immediately and would be independent of the southern universities in a decade or less.

But City Council got faculty on the carpet during a televised meeting and proved that they were "Johnny-come-latelies" who lacked public spirit and were worried more about their jobs than their students. Every group that gave them a hearing did something similar. The Dahllof model was not, after all, "cast in stone." The town was not "wedded to it." It turned out that the regions were, however, so the public fight with faculty necessarily got mean. It was suspected that CNC faculty were fronting for the Ministry on this issue. They knew too much, and were being quoted by Hagen as experts.

Anyway, the town kept it all

together and eventually the government caved in and bought the idea. Hagen set up an implementation committee which produced a report and Strachan accepted the report and announced that legislation would be passed to set things up. The fact that the Dahllof idea was dumped (Hagen too had gone to Sweden but was not impressed) worried no one but some people in the regions, especially the board at Northern Lights, which rescinded its support of the university idea and asked for a university college. Most people agreed that the main point had been gained and the University Society was vindicated in its approach.

What's now coming is, according to the implementation report, a \$170 million campus on 250 acres somewhere in Prince George, run by an interim board that will be both senate and board until these permanent bodies can be established (the Dahllof plan dispensed with a senate altogether). The Universities Act will be changed to permit this and specify that the new university has equal standing with the other three and has regional representation on its board. Within five years, the university should be offering Arts and Science degrees in twelve disciplines as yet unspecified to some 900 full-time students. To attract a full quota of students, it will give university credit for two-year college and BCIT diplomas so that Forestry Technicians, for example, who want to become professional foresters, won't have to start at square one. The college will continue to offer first-year but the university will also offer it (presumably its entrance standards will be higher). Some programs will start up in September, 1991.

Already, benefits are rolling in. Real estate values have gone up and speculation in certain areas of town is reaching fever pitch with the newspaper and radio stations conducting polls about the preferred location. Hong Kong investor Jenson Cheng, new owner of the local Yellowhead Inn, now figures he can move to build a water bottling plant, plastics factory, toy factory and Asian college.

On the down side, the proposed expansion of the over-crowded college had to be shelved and the regions now realize they have been shafted. CNC faculty are worried about their jobs or (worse) teaching only the lunkheads who couldn't make it into the university. However, nobody has much sympathy for faculty after what they did. Finally, Charles McCaffray was fired. This was a shock to the town and an unexpected benefit to faculty, but no one really knows why it happened, except that it is connected somehow to the new university. The 1989 external audit report had pronounced CNC a disaster area, but all previous audit reports had said the same and been ignored so why was it a big deal now? Word is that the Socreds blame the whole northern university fiasco on McCaffray since he got the idea, helped float it and got CNC board to turn down the university college plan. They were mad enough to have him canned, though it will cost them votes and (lots of) money. It seems that the portrait of McCaffray, commissioned by the Society, for the foyer of the new university, will not hang there, at least while Strachan is Minister. But it will hang there eventually: McCaffray is a hero locally. Probably, Prince George will end up getting pretty much what

Kamloops and Kelowna got, only it will take longer, cost more and have less probability of success. The government is already trying to cut its losses. Strachan is warning the locals that their expectations are too high. The institution, he says, will evolve, possibly in cooperation with the college and, certainly, with a lot of OLA involvement. There will be no immediate expansion into the regions and any such expansion in the future will have to be proven feasible. Strachan has also made a point of saying that the town should expect, as the report put it, "an infusion of fresh and sometimes unconventional or uncomfortable ideas." In short, no more commie bashing. No more smear campaigns against people who teach or study creative writing, political science, or French. No more crazy attempts to pursue high tech pipe-dreams at the expense of the basics. No repeat of the sorry history of CNC.

In Prince George, however, no one's listening to Strachan's talk. The main thing is, there will be buildings and permanent jobs and more retail trade. The smaller details can be worked out later. That general feeling was expressed by McCaffray in a recent public shouting match with Strachan. Massive local input on things like program offerings is not now needed, he said. It's the Ministry's job to run the university and ensure its success. They should get on with it.

The public, it seems, has other things to think about. A convention centre, for example, could still be a possibility. Or maybe a cancer clinic.....

John Harris
College of New Caledonia

Editor's Note: The following is the text of a memo from Jocelyn Cass to the Access Committee dated February 21, 1990.....

Education of Upper Level Undergraduates in the Fraser Valley . .

Why have we not proceeded, as SFU has done, to create an internal proposal on further education? Why wait on a joint report which does not necessarily address our concerns or those of our community? We, like SFU, should have our own agenda and we should, even at this late date, get a proposal under way: as soon as possible, I believe.

SFU took the initiative, which was politically smart, but if we come up with a proposal Kwantlen and Douglas can support, we may still regain some of the ground lost. I suggest FVC becoming a University College will not gain such support and the news from Okanagan and Cariboo about the process is discouraging.

In developing any proposal we need our communities' support. At the moment they may well believe an SFU satellite campus in Langley is the best thing since sliced bread. Do they understand the dangers to the UT and some other programmes at FVC? I often hear local people say they are proud of the College. I do not think they would like it to be a Trade School and remedial institution. I think, like us, our communities believe in high standards and comprehensiveness.

Do parents and students understand that first and second year tuition at most universities is expensive to them but profitable to the institutions because teaching assistants, usually graduate students, are used and faculty lecture only to large courses? The students'

individual instruction -- in some universities all their instruction -- is in the hands of teaching assistants. Thus, first and second year students provide supportive funding for expensive and often small undergraduate and graduate programmes.

Why jeopardize what we do well, for something the universities do badly? Is the possibility understood?

A much more sensible alternative, in my view, would be to urge the development of a separate, upper-level, undergraduate institution with a funding base which would recognize the absence of the first two years on which existing universities depend so heavily to balance their budgets. The Ministry might well be reconciled to the extra cost when it saw that first and second year were still being handled at the colleges more economically than a university could manage.

We know that we have large wait lists in many UT disciplines. We know many of the students who do complete first and second year cannot raise the money to go to university. They have only managed to stay in College because it was near enough for them to work part-time and live at home.

A third and fourth year institution close at hand would enable such students to complete degrees. Our wait lists give an indication of where the demand is.

The new institution should be a real university -- with a really good library and a faculty whose names and qualifications would make them useful mentors and valuable connections for students moving to graduate work or into the professions. Academic and professional success still depends a great deal on these factors.

The relationship of the third and fourth year institution to the colleges in its region would be unusual but not unheard of. The CEGEP model was considered by Dr. McGeer at one time: this is little more than an adaptation of it. The other available model would be the Oxbridge, U. of T. one, but somehow I feel that is less readily transferable and would raise more alarm in bureaucratic breasts because it is less comprehensible and less tidy.

I assume we would be looking at an institution like Trent University, without graduate schools and with the usual disciplines in Arts, Sciences

and Business. Specialties established in other universities in the province and at BCIT and OLA should not be expensively duplicated unless clear necessity for this could be shown. I do not know of any survey demonstrating the need at this time. We should, of course, investigate.

May I point out in closing, that the universities' recent restriction on College entrants points out most effectively where the bottleneck is: at third year?

May I add that various spokesmen from Simon Fraser have unwarily revealed a most self-interested agenda? If SFU doesn't get the satellite campus, it will suffer because funding will be reduced to pay for the new institution. I translate that as "a satellite campus is a milch-cow." I do not know whether that inference can be conveyed to the community outside the College. Insiders understand it quite well.

Jocelyn Cass

P. D. Report: SSHRC Workshop on Getting Grants . . .

I recently attended a workshop at Capilano College on SSHRC (Social Services and Humanities Research Council) and its granting procedures. In spite of assurances from John Potts that ACCC had been assured that college teachers would be given special consideration because of their heavy teaching loads, the changes in granting procedures seemed to me to militate against our obtaining funding support. 44.7% of SSHRC's budget is expended on discipline-based activities. Its policies in this area are:

- to give no grants under \$5,000; the maximum to be \$250,000, \$100,000 in any one year. To fund applicants fully, though this means fewer people receive support.
- to treat the worth of the project was the next most significant factor, the balance to be 70% to track record, 30% to proposal.
- to fund projects for up to 3 years.
- to give preference to projects

employing graduate students, i.e., with a training component.

- to give new scholars (recent graduates) a reversed weighting, as they have had no time to establish a track record -- 30% to track record, 70% to proposal.

In addition to discipline-based research, there is a budget for hosting conferences, and for international representation to boards and conferences.

PRACTICAL TIPS ON MAKING APPLICATIONS

Find out which of the 15 committees you should apply to. Call SSHRC for assistance -- an officer is attached to each committee.

Get your peers to vet your proposal.

College instructors should write a letter explaining their teaching commitments and the

absence of a track record. Consult the list of grants approved, which also contains a list of committee members.

If you get back a proposal, note the comments, make use of them, and reapply.

Interdisciplinary projects are encouraged.

Funding for teaching replacements is \$27,000, spread over three years, and is not easy to obtain.

Strategic grants are given to stimulate research in areas SSRHC is trying to encourage. The track record is less important than the quality of the proposal, which should have a training aspect, and should promote joint initiatives with scholars abroad. Current themes are Science and Technology Policy, Managing for Global Competition, Research Tools for Canadian Studies, Women and Work, and Education and Work in a Changing Society. Further information can be obtained from Pam Wiggin (613) 992-4283.

Jocelyn Cass

Ed. note: the following is an excerpt from a letter written by John Potts, to Tom Norton, Executive Director, Association of Canadian Community Colleges --

"On Friday, March 16th, we held ACCC's first Social Science and Humanities Research Council grant writing workshop. During the workshop we identified particular problems that would pose a formidable barrier to college faculty seeking SSRHC grants. First, SSRHC has changed its criteria as of this year for its regular research grant program. Under the new

guidelines, applicants would be divided into two categories: "new scholars and (for lack of a better term) "old" scholars. New scholars are applicants who are no more than two years removed from graduate school and they are not expected to have an extensive research history. For new scholars, SSRHC grant committees would weight the quality of their proposal (its

merits, design, etc.) as 70% when awarding grant. For "old" scholars, the proposal would be weighted at 30%. "Old" scholars' "track records" in research would carry a 70% weight for the awarding of grants.

It is obvious that very few college faculty in the "old" category would stand a chance of competing with university faculty whose workload has always included research. With College faculty teaching 15 to 20 hours a week (compared to 7 to 12 hours in universities) it is a wonder that college faculty find any time to establish a "track record". Although we know that many have carried on research, it can't compare in volume to that done by university faculty. Most college faculty do, of course, fall into the "old" category since very few are just recently from graduate school.

The second major problem we encountered deals with release time from teaching. Since university faculty have a lighter teaching load to begin with, and SSRHC considers that a university's contribution to research is, in part, to ensure that non-teaching time is available, SSRHC is not generous in its allowance for teaching replacement. As you know, college faculty have no research time built into their contracts. The limited funding for teaching release (\$27,000 over three years, up to \$9,000 in one year) is a severe restriction. Nine thousand dollars might fund two

course releases in one year. In most cases this would leave college faculty with at least a six-course load (12 hours a week).

If the two limitations described above are applied to college applicants, without consideration for the context in which they work, I would say we should cease our initiatives to broaden college participation in SSHRC grant funding. Otherwise, we are just raising false expectations. I have talked with SSRHC officials and they indicate they understand the problem, but beyond giving verbal reassurance that grant committees might treat college applicants differently if they are made aware of their circumstances, there is nothing to indicate that these guidelines won't be applied equally to college and university applicants.

I recommend that you approach SSRHC and make a presentation on behalf of college faculty. You might request that SSRHC draft guideline amendments for college applicants that would take these factors into account. Perhaps they could be treated more like "new" scholars and teaching release allowances be increased.

In summary, I want to state that SSRHC has been very helpful by providing materials for our workshop and by appointing college faculty to sit on some grant committees. I am optimistic that, once SSRHC realizes some of the limitations imposed by present guidelines, allowances will be made to broaden research opportunities for college faculty."

FSA President's Message...

Since this message will be part of the last newsletter before our general meeting on 9 May, it will be my annual report.

On the provincial scene, changes in post-secondary education have been dramatic. A new university has been announced and three colleges -- Okanagan, Cariboo, and Malaspina -- have become four-year university colleges. Degree completion initiatives for the Fraser Valley are as yet undecided. Demand for college services continues to grow and F.V.C. has no doubt entered an expansionary phase, rendering our existing facilities inadequate. Construction is about to get under way and portable classrooms will also go up.

Our provincial organization (CIEA) is attempting to respond to this changing picture by building a consensus among college personnel, board officials, college administrators, and ministry officials in order to ensure that the interests of college employees don't get lost in the shuffle and that new institutions are not satellites of others. CIEA's work in bread-and-butter bargaining issues and coordination of assistance, along with its efforts concerning pension improvements, professional development, and women's rights, is more vital and active than ever. When I began attending CIEA's college presidents' council I had a few concerns for our own autonomy at F.V.C., but over the year I have been assured that CIEA's goals and our independence were compatible and that other college associations were just as protective of their local autonomy while at the same time

more cooperative with CIEA than we have been. CIEA is a strong and growing force on the provincial education scene, about the most democratic and active we could wish. Two more associations -- Langara faculty and the Vocational Instructors -- have joined recently, about 1000 new members. CIEA's budget in 1990-91 will top \$1,000,000 and new staff is being recruited in order to meet rising service demands. College associations, working through the CIEA focal point, inform each other about the standards we can set together, which produces better collective agreements and better efforts to represent our concerns to government. CIEA's annual general meeting is in Prince George, 30 May - 2 June. Several FSA delegates are entitled to attend.

The executive recently responded to CIEA's request for a pledge of a \$10,000 loan to assist a new local. The loan, if called, is guaranteed by CIEA's reserve fund (\$150,000). Since this is a loan, not a grant, the FSA Executive felt the emergency action would find your approval. However, a FSA policy concerning such loans is needed to guide future Executives. If and when we find ourselves in a strike or lockout situation, other college associations, through CIEA, will come to our assistance.

On the home front, the FSA is also growing. The recent inclusion of part-time staff and faculty as well as new full-time appointments have raised our membership to 380. This has created a growing demand for union services which we can provide, given some good planning and aided by our very healthy bank account. The

membership will be asked to approve a budget providing the FSA with the means to do so.

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee requires an elected chairperson to respond to the increasing concerns about VDT hazards, fire code infractions, the proliferation of hazardous or merely noxious materials in the workplace, etc., and to acquire the legislative and WCB standards and other information that will put members in the know and relieve the growing unease about workplace environmental issues. As the College puts up new structures in 1990-91, the need to respond is clear. This year 16 members have lodged OHS complaints and as many more have made inquiries.

The increase in the FSA membership and the College's increasingly complicated and dynamic operation demands other responses. A new executive meeting schedule is imperative. The executive can no longer address a lengthening agenda within its two-hour slot every four weeks, even if the emergency meetings are also counted in. Executive officers must be enabled to attend 1 1/2 hour to 2-hour meetings every two weeks. I hope this is clear: the FSA executive cannot find the time to consider fully your affairs. The President's release time should be increased. There are now 18 evening board meetings and 9 weekend meetings in Vancouver, a growing internal meeting schedule, and all the agenda and administrative chores. Mounting enquiries alone add several hours to the schedule every month. This begs the need for improvements in our communications system.

The budgetary impact of these

requirements will be slight in the short term in that there will be no need to resource the Contract Chair. We now have our first closed two-year agreement and thus there will be no bargaining in 1990-91.

With our two-year closed Collective Agreement, the FSA's attention should focus on contract maintenance, effective and vigilant enforcement of the contract we've got. This is a standard union principle. The FSA wants to avoid having to take action about contract irregularities that have been happening for a long time. The key here is members' awareness of the contract so that timely notice of possible violations is given to the grievance chairpersons. Last fall I offered an orientation for new FSA members and this spring Mary Saunders is conducting a staff shop steward workshop for all interested staff. We could do with more of these efforts. At one time, many members knew the contract well, but over the years, it has grown complicated and confusing.

A negotiations policy paper will soon be circulated. We should review our contract negotiations procedures that determine our Collective Agreement so that all members, executives, and contract bargainers know what the rules are. Old hands need a "recipe" to refresh their memories and new members will want to consult an authoritative document to see how we arrive at Collective Agreements. Mistakes will always be made in negotiations: the goal here is to guard as best we can against them.

Last fall, I recommended to the executive that some release time be assigned to Jocelyn Creigh-Cass, FSA recording secretary, to review our minutes, all she

could lay her hands on and numerous other FSA documents, in order to compile our policies. Needless to say, unless we know precisely what policies we have, the membership and executive cannot comport themselves in any orderly manner and will find itself moving from one misunderstanding to another.

The new ed. leave plan is now being considered by B faculty. If it is approved, more short-term and long-term leaves will be available for both faculty and staff. I say staff because with a new faculty plan, there will be much less pressure on the existing in-service p.d. account from which staff can now alone draw leave funds.

Strides have been made in the FSA office. The FSA office assistant has shown great diligence and an interest in ordering masses of papers and a bewildering array of procedures, so-called. The office is open, four days a week, and members frequent it more as a result. Our system of communication with members is improving but we have

quite a way to go to ensure that announcements actually reach all members.

The FSA has become a sponsor of the College's second day-care centre. (Ages ago we granted \$5,000 to the first). Linda Matwichuk and I applied for and received an \$8,000 grant from the Ministry of Social Services and Housing. \$500 has been voted for a scholarship and \$500 annual grant to the Essay Prize fund administered by the Writing Centre. The FSA continues to offer \$500 to the various Christmas funds in our communities and to co-operate in the United Way Christmas drive.

Finally, I would like to say that it has been a pleasure working with you. The FSA office assistant, Fenella Sobchuk, deserves a vote of thanks for making the FSA office function, and Bertha Dewan in Chilliwack has pitched in when I am working there and should receive special mention.

Bob Smith

From the Contract Chair . . .

By the results of the contract vote (Faculty: 48 for, 46 against, Staff: 53 for, 45 against), the outcome of our negotiations clearly was not spectacular. Nevertheless, several important changes were achieved in this bargaining session. First, negotiations were concluded while the term was in progress, before the College budget became known. We have also achieved a two-year contract, commonplace elsewhere,

but before this negotiation not achieved here, at least in my memory. Thus we have broken a long-standing tradition whereby salaries were negotiated as a residual rather than a driving item in the budgetary process. This shows a significant shift in management focus toward treating salaries as a priority

Second, significant improvements were made in our benefits package, improvements long

overdue. The employer's cost share of the benefit package rises to 75% in 1990-91 and 90% in 1991-92. This is the first year since I came to the college that an improvement has been made in this area. By 1992-93, we can expect to be in line with other colleges.

Third, changes have been made to the maintenance/facilities staff schedule to bring the scale more into line with comparable scales elsewhere.

Fourth, the academic assistant category has been established for positions requiring a bachelor's degree, and these positions now move from the staff to the faculty component. An assessment of salaries for comparable positions at other colleges is to be carried out in the months ahead, and with respect to current duties of the incumbents, any salary adjustment deriving from the review will be retroactive to April 1st.

STAFF COMPONENT COLLEGE CONTRACT SETTLEMENTS:	% increase	
	90/91	91/92
BCIT	6.0	--
Capilano	6.0	5.0
CNC (\$1.00/hr.)	7.0	7.0
Douglas	6.0	--
Kwantlen	6.0	--
OLA	6.0	4.5
FVC	7.5	7.0

* * * * *

For faculty, base salaries are more readily comparable. In terms of the salary base, this contract is a shallow victory for the 1991/92 contract year. We achieve rough parity with the local school districts for a couple of months. When their contracts expire, we will again be behind. Regarding other

For Staff, the 7.5% and 7.0% is, by comparative standards, a good settlement. Langley School District's two week strike by support staff netted that group a roughly comparable percentage settlement over two years (see attached advertisement). Other college settlements for 90/91 and 91/92 are shown in the table below.

Admittedly, these numbers don't tell us about the salary base, and they do not compare job descriptions. The problem is that, on an individual basis, it is hard to compare jobs to demonstrate that the base is low. At the same time, in mediation, and in job action, it is the percentage lift that takes the limelight. For those staff who believe a mediator would ignore the percentage comparison, think again!

colleges, we have achieved rough parity with Kwantlen (in salary only; Kwantlen pays 100% of benefits) and we have narrowed the gap with some of the other colleges (any % lift would have achieved that). There is a very real danger that our current settlement will leave us very badly off in relation to the

other colleges if other settlements continue to follow the pattern set by Douglas, CNC, and now Selkirk. However, this is a very big if, which among other things will depend upon the largesse of the Provincial Government in making up for funding shortfalls created by the reduction in federal transfer payments.

The real and substantial commitment which the College has made is the 7% lift in year two of the contract. An alternative scenario is that salary settlements in 91/92 will be, on average, somewhat lower than FVC's commitment, and if that is the case, our settlement won't look too bad and won't leave us in the basement. No scenario puts us in the penthouse.

Bob's memo of March 26th advising of the membership vote alluded to a critical issue now facing the FSA, and one for which we must prepare ourselves before the next contract negotiation. It is clearly unsatisfactory for either staff or faculty to be able to approve a contract offer which becomes binding on the other group. Two faculty votes the other way would have presented us with that problem now. If FVC faculty falls further behind, by next contract this problem will inevitably present itself. It is my view that we must begin to address this issue now. If we do not, it will be exceedingly difficult to satisfy either staff or faculty interests next negotiation.

Ian McAskill

Langley School Trustees'
Message to the Community

- The Board is pleased to see the students, teachers and support staff return to school and to their classrooms.
- The Board of Trustees and the two CUPE locals negotiated a fair contract settlement for the support staff and for the district.
- Trustees believe the contract responds to the needs, concerns and interests of our staff while maintaining accountability to the community.
- In response to questions from concerned taxpayers in the Langley School District, we offer the following contract information:

The Board previously offered 12% over two years.
Final Settlement over two years is

	July 1/89	July 1/90	Jan. 1/91
for CUPE Local 1260	6%	4%	3%
for CUPE Local 1851 (tradesman)	6%*	4%*	3%*
for CUPE Local 1851 (janitor/custodian)	6%*	4%*	3%*

It was agreed during mediation to delay implementation of the Municipal Superannuation (pension plan) so that an additional 1% could be applied to salaries.

Special Adjustments

The Board recognized the need to offer wages comparable to surrounding districts at the outset of negotiations. Special adjustments were offered by the Board in their original wage proposal to CUPE 1851. The final settlement is a 1% increase to these special adjustments and a 1% special adjustment to CUPE 1260.

For more information, please contact your elected Trustees:

Chairman Marlene Grinnell ... 534-8787	
Bruce Barnes 530-5217	Gordon Greenwood 888-8388
Rosemary Boister 855-6547	Linda Mow 888-1065
Barbara Fawell 888-1048	Chris Pelipas 534-2255

88 LANGLEY TIMES, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 1990

FSA NOMINATION FORM
ELECTION OF OFFICERS

YEAR 1990/91

Nominations shall be open until the Annual General Meeting and shall close at the Annual General Meeting.

Please complete and forward nomination forms to Fenella Sobchuk in the FSA Office, Abbotsford campus.

POSITIONS TO BE FILLED:

President
First Faculty Vice-President
First Staff Vice-President
Second Faculty Vice-President
Second Staff Vice-President
Recording Secretary
Treasurer
Communications Chair
Grievance Chair (normally one of these two will be
Grievance Vice-Chair (staff and one will be faculty
Professional Development Chair
Agreements Chair
Job Classification Audit Chair
Occupational Health & Safety Committee

I NOMINATE _____

FOR THE POSITION OF

(name and signature of NOMINATOR)

— (date)

I ACCEPT THE NOMINATION _____
(signature of NOMINEE)

Please complete and forward to Fenella in the FSA Office, Abbotsford campus.

Duties of Officers

5.1 Duties of the Past President: The Past President shall provide background information to the Committee of Officers on matters previously discussed, and shall provide any necessary assistance as requested by the current President.

5.2 Duties of the President: The President shall preside over meetings of the Committee of Officers, and over all general meetings of the Association. The President is empowered to enforce obedience to the Constitution and to uphold rules of order. He/she shall exercise a general care over and supervision of the officers of the Association. The President or his nominee shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. The President will attend College Institute Educators Association (CIEA) Executive meetings and will allocate other CIEA duties and responsibilities as required.

5.3 Duties of First Vice-Presidents: The Vice-President shall assume all the responsibilities and duties of the President in his/her absence, including chairing meetings, setting agendas, attending meetings, etc. The Vice-Presidents shall act as general ombudspersons for the people they represent and shall ensure adequate communication between the Committee of Officers and the general Association membership. The Vice-Presidents shall attend College Advisory Council meetings as the Association's representatives.

5.4 Duties of Second Vice-Presidents: The Second Faculty or Staff Vice-President shall assume the responsibilities and duties of the respective First Vice-President in his or her absence.

5.5 Duties of the Recording Secretary: The Recording Secretary shall record the minutes of all general meetings and all meetings of the Committee of Officers. He shall be responsible for the preparation and circulation of these minutes to all members of the Committee of Officers, as well as all agendas and notices of meetings. He shall ensure that the minutes, when approved at a meeting of the committee, are posted at each campus, placed in the LRC archives, and kept in his file.

5.6 Duties of the Treasurer: The Treasurer shall receive all funds of the Association, and shall establish and maintain such banking accounts and books as are required for the purposes of the business of the Association, as detailed in the Executive Handbook. He shall make any disbursements authorized by the Committee of Officers. He shall present a report on the trial balance with statements of revenues and expenses at the first Committee meeting of each month, and shall arrange for the annual audit. The treasurer shall ensure that all new employees receive the correct form required as part of their employment with the college, including the dues check-off form and a membership form for the Association. In addition, the Treasurer shall keep membership lists up to date, with information as specified in the Executive Handbook.

5.7 Duties of the Chairpersons of Standing Committees: Standing committees of the Association shall be established for the following purposes, and the chairpersons of such standing committees shall assume the duties as described:

(a) The Contract Committee Chairperson shall convene a Contract Committee and shall preside as chairperson at all meetings of such committee, and shall report on a regular basis to the Committee of Officers and to the general membership as required, on all matters relating to contracts. His or her deputies are empowered to negotiate with the College Board and/or the College Administration, on behalf of the Association, such negotiations being subject to ratification by the general membership. Should the

general membership fail to ratify his recommendations to them, the Contract Committee Chairperson shall forthwith tender his resignation as Chairperson of that Committee.

- (b) The Communications Committee Chairperson shall direct his attention to maintaining and improving communications among members of the Association, and between the Association and the College Board and College Administration. He shall be responsible for issuing, on a regular basis, a newsletter to all members of the Association, soliciting, where appropriate, contributions from other Association members. Short news items shall be submitted by the Communications Chairperson to the Public Information Officer for inclusion in the regular college newsletter, and he shall from time to time submit articles to be printed in the local press as requested by the Committee of Officers.
- (c) The Grievance Committee Chairperson is responsible for receiving all grievances, collecting all the necessary information about a grievance, and acting at steps in the grievance procedure as specified in the College Agreement. The Grievance Chairperson is also responsible for the dissemination of information to the Area Representatives and for the composition and operation of the Grievance Committee, which consists of the Area Representatives. This includes regular contact and education through workshops and seminars. The Grievance Committee Chairperson must be familiar with the terms of the Collective Agreement, and with the decisions of the Agreements Committee, and must be able to provide advice and counsel the Area Representatives and any Association member who feels himself aggrieved.
- (d) The Professional Development Committee Chairperson shall co-chair the Joint Professional Development Committee and ensure that divisional allocations for professional development reflect the Association's and the College's commitment to professional development for all employees of the college. He shall report regularly to the Committee of Officers on the proceedings of the P.D. Committee, and from time to time establish suitable forums for college professional development workshops.
- (e) The Agreements Committee Chairperson shall receive and reply to all questions concerning the current collective agreement, its interpretations and its applications. In conjunction with the Agreements Committee, he shall review all policy matters under consideration by the College Council in order to establish whether such policy could be interpreted so as to conflict with the College Agreement. In the event of a grievance, the Agreements Committee acts at the appropriate step of the grievance procedure, as specified in the Collective Agreement.
- (f) The Grievance Committee Vice-Chairperson shall be responsible for learning the duties of the Grievance Chairperson, becoming knowledgeable about the terms and usage of the Collective Agreement, and assisting the Grievance Chair. The person in this office shall normally stand for election as Grievance Committee Chairperson when a new person is to be elected to that position.
- (g) The Job Classification Audit Committee Chairperson shall co-chair the Job Classification Audit Committee to ensure that the FSA commitment to the job evaluation system is carried out. The JCAC chairperson shall report regularly to the Committee of Officers on the proceedings of the JCAC, and from time to time establish suitable forums for providing informational workshops on the classification system to college staff.

Resolutions to be presented at the AGM

From Tom Davis:

Proxy votes not be allowed at any meeting of the Faculty and Staff Association.

Rationale: Without hearing the arguments presented on a complex issue, it is impossible to balance all of the nuances. Interested FSA members should be present (to the extent of making special arrangements for this to be possible) to vote on FSA matters.

From Ian McAskill

We must provide the Executive with direction regarding the appropriation of FSA funds. I propose that all appropriations greater than \$500 which are for uses other than the direct interests if the FSA and its members must be subject to approval by the general membership.

Rationale: This is intended to prohibit the use of FSA funds by CIEA in funding strikes of other affiliated unions without a membership vote.

"Appropriation" is intended to include loans such as the \$10,000 loan made April 5, 1990 to CIEA to fund the VIA strike.

From Betty Harris:

Should we re-consider our participation in CIEA? Do the benefits outweigh the costs?

Rationale: In the calendar year 1989, the FSA paid out \$55,932.01 in CIEA dues. That represents an estimated annual per capita FTE equivalent contribution of \$370.00

Report from First Faculty Vice President . . .

During the past couple of weeks, a number of meetings on education have taken place, and the following report indicates some of the topics discussed at those sessions.

Associate Degree Workshop, March 23, 1990, Richmond.

Attended by college presidents, deans, college board members, assorted faculty, and others, the Associate Degree Workshop

involved discussions of several options presented by Dr. John Dennison, Professor of Higher Education, UBC. The focus of the discussion was the consideration of four proposed options which could lead to the awarding of what could be called an "Associate Degree". This "degree" would be awarded by colleges as a first degree (following degrees would be B.A., B. Sc., etc.).

Participants discussed the pros and cons of the options, and the consensus seemed to be that colleges should grant something to recognize the completion of two years of academic course work, although there was not unanimous support for calling it a "degree" (BCIT reps didn't want it called a diploma, either). Discussion also focused on what should be included in such a program; the consensus was that the answer fell somewhere between options B and C, which would require an academic core, but which would give the colleges some flexibility in defining what should be in the course. These options are reprinted for your edification.

There are some interesting implications should the Ministry of Advanced Education decide to implement a province-wide college associate degree program. One: will there be a standardized set of core courses (perhaps administered by the Open Learning Agency)? Two: will colleges which have few courses in the academic area be required to expand (indeed, will they be able to expand)? Three: will the granting of an associate degree be a way of deflecting students from going on for a real degree? For those of you with a bit of sociology in your head, the associate degree program could simply be a way of "cooling-out" the post-secondary population. Given the other changes in post-secondary education, we may be seeing the start of a multi-tiered system, with (1) universities; (2) university colleges; (3) associate degree colleges; and (4) colleges not able to offer associate degrees.

It was interesting to see old friends and foes, many looking somewhat grayer in their

recycled positions. Aside from that, I would guess that the Ministry would like to see some form of provincial associate degree program. A report will be forthcoming, we were told.

Access Meeting

Two access meetings were held at FVC. One, on March 21, featured speakers from SFU, Okanagan College, and Malaspina College, who presented their views on SFU plans, autonomous universities, and university colleges. The forum was videotaped -- ask at your nearest video outlet for an uncut version. You watching it saves me writing about it. On March 28, a follow-up forum was held in Salon B. The outcome of that discussion was a decision to hold another meeting -- but at least we narrowed the next discussion down to two options. It was decided that we should discuss in detail the pros and cons of (1) a university college model, and whether or not FVC would be in the running for such a transformation, and (2) the establishment of a valley-wide university college system, within which there would be a facility dedicated to teaching third and fourth year courses, and with existing colleges providing first and second year academic courses (plus the present range of vocational-career programs).

University of the North, etc.

Following the Richmond workshop on associate degrees, I met with a colleague from CIEA, CNC, and Okanagan to discuss events in Prince George and the Okanagan. The transformation of the northern colleges will be dramatic, and there are some very real concerns about the viability of college-based

academic programs. Some of the issues were discussed in the last CIEA newsletter, which I suggest you read. I have also started a general university college file in the FSA office,

and will feed the file information on events of interest.

I trust that the above is of use.

Doug Hudson

A Highly Biased Report on the Associate Degree Workshop . . .

One way to sum up the tenor of much of the discussion could be to say:

ASSOCIATE DEGREES (?) -- TO BE OR NOT TO BE, THE DEGREE, THAT IS -- A DEGREE, IS A DEGREE, IS A DEGREE -- (unless you represent one of the universities).

Instead of duplicating much of Doug Hudson's report, I want to give my idiosyncratic view of selected parts of the day.

The day began and ended with plenary sessions. The time in between was spent in one of four working groups which seemed to each contain a cross-section of the audience. I ended up in a large group which contained the Deputy Minister of Advanced Education and Training (I think that's the full title). I was intrigued to see he stayed for the full day. That convinced me the Ministry is more than just interested in an associate credential of some kind for two years of UT. His contributions to the group and his closing comments to the final plenary session consistently pointed to a government agenda that found a use for an associate credential of some kind.

I think the agenda consists of a public and a private part. Here are my basic assumptions. I

think both parts come as a result of government's looking at all of BC's post-secondary education resources as part of a system. Of course, this is anathema to the universities. Because of the nature of their respective controlling legislation, colleges are much more tightly bound to government directives than universities. Just think about the line by line control the government has over our budget and compare that to the "block grant" budgets of the universities. The government is quite happy with the concept of a BC post-secondary system and sees the colleges as a natural (and cheap) part of it.

The public portion is the government's need to increase participation rates in post-secondary education (including UT access) in the cheapest way possible, as well as its desire to bring more order and control to the burgeoning difficulties in transfer, admissions, and articulation. These latter problems seem to be increasing almost exponentially as more specialized, technical or plain different courses and programs appear at all of BC's post-secondary institutions. The public seems to expect that eventually, in one form or other, the government will "fix" these problems.

The private portion is a related one. In the name of increased participation and a more "efficient" system, the government wants to:

i) coerce the universities into more unified course offerings in at least the first two years. This would certainly help with a majority of the transfer and admission problems mentioned above.

ii) coerce the universities into offering general education degrees. I translate this as something akin to the old liberal arts and sciences degrees we used to be able to get at some Canadian universities. The major reasons for this seem to be twofold. The government has noticed that the present system in science and applied science works very well for the universities. They get many of the best high school graduates, grind them up, spit most out partway through, and end up with a very good, but relatively rare, "product" at the end. It's a very wasteful process in human and economic terms with extremely specialized people at the end of it. The other reason comes from the narrow nature of much of the current academic training provided by the usual degree choices. The government sees general education degrees as a way to increase the number of people getting degrees, and to increase the number of degrees "useful" to many employers, i.e., graduates who can read, write, reason and continue to learn after university (you know -- all that basic but good stuff that gets left out of most modern degree options).

How does this tie in with the associate credential (hereafter called the "associate *")? I think the associate * allows the

government to increase the role of colleges in offering two years of UT, to offer a visible incentive to students to complete at least two years of UT and to offer a visible "badge" to prospective employers in the market for people who have demonstrated a certain level of intelligence, discipline and flexibility. It will also provide a base for encouraging the first two years of a general education degree option at the colleges. Of course, such programs would likely be more consistent over the province than the existing university degree options. Over time it is likely that such patterns of development will shape public expectations to the extent they will "encourage" the universities to develop more homogeneous paths through the first two years, and to provide general education degree options if they haven't already done so. All of this can be initiated by the government without the explicit initial cooperation of the universities. This may be the only way the government, over time, can exert the kind of control they seem to want over the "system".

I don't think I'm being overly paranoid about any of this, and, in fact, it doesn't bother me all that much. I think we have a good chance in all of this to continue to do much of what we do now that makes us different from a university, and grow in directions many of us will be happy with. I feel quietly optimistic about our UT future. After all, sooner or later the government has to screw up in a way that benefits us -- right?

P.S. I think this can mean we have a good chance of being a more integrated part of the valley university scene without being a four year institution.

Of course, I think that our becoming a four year or university-college institution will eventually mean we become a second or third rate university, and a very poor college.

I don't want that at all. I think we do a very good job of the first two years of UT and we should continue to focus on that.

Doug McDowell

Report From Agreements Chair . . .

Matters which have been discussed by the Agreements Committee are:

1. Status of the Joint Classification Audit Committee.

While we have always treated JCAC as a joint committee, it was pointed out that a statement in the committee's internal procedures manual implied that JCAC was only an advisory committee. Management and FSA agreed that this statement will be removed and both sides reiterated their commitment to the "jointness" of the JCAC.

2. Student Workers - Definition

Student workers were not mentioned nor defined in the collective agreement when other part-timers were included. It was agreed to define them as an employee of FVC, who is not included in the bargaining unit as defined in Article 2.1 of the Collective Agreement and will not be used to replace FSA members."

3. Limited Employment Status for Type "C" employees.

The present language on this is not very clear although both Management and the FSA have always agreed on its meaning. To clarify, it was agreed to state, in Article 31.3 "Type A

or B employees will be given preference over type C employees who have equal or less qualifications to meet the criteria of the position".

4. Exclusions from Bargaining Unit

At the request of Management and the two people concerned, the FSA has agreed to release the positions of Secretary to the Dean of Academic Studies and Secretary to the Associate Dean of Community Services.

5. Summer Hours

As there has been a perception that summer hours were granted or not granted to staff on a somewhat arbitrary basis in the past, the FSA asked for an undertaking that summer hours will be offered to all type A staff who work full-time for 12 months. The Management agreed to this with 7 exclusions: for a one-year trial period. The positions not included are: two Maintenance, one Groundskeeper, one Shipper-Receiver, and two Courier positions.

6. Other matters not yet concluded, include the progression of Regular Part-timers to "C" status, and the procedures for "investigatory" hearings.

W.E. Harris
Director, L.R.C.

Ed. note: the following P.R. blurb was commissioned by the open house committee, then axed, apparently along with 50% of the other submissions (don't ask me, ask the PIO). Since I can't bear to see my scribblings go to waste, here it is, where it might at least serve as a brief history designed for easy digestion in even the queasiest of citizen stomachs.

Fifteen Years of Faculty and Staff Association . . .

Labour relations at Fraser Valley College have been so smooth that the public might wonder whether a union exists at all. The only strike was not a strike at all but a three-day 'job action' in 1983, carried out in concert with virtually every other teacher in B.C. as part of Operation Solidarity's response to the provincial government's infamous restraint programme.

In the beginning, there almost wasn't a union. Back in 1975, a group of faculty and staff made a proposition: agree to pay us the median salary across the college system and we'll never wrangle over salaries again.

The offer was refused. In 1976, faculty and staff cast an almost unanimous vote to form the Faculty and Staff Association -- two legally separate entities which in fact have operated as a single bargaining unit unique in the province (every other college has a faculty association and a staff unit usually organized as a local of a larger union like the (BCGEU). Despite the opinion of one notorious education minister that professionalism and unionism don't mix, the effect has been to create a genuine feeling of mutual respect and common cause across the whole range of College employees.

Contract negotiations only got truly testy once, and the issue was not salaries but workload.

The province, still (always?) in Restraint Mode, decided a few years ago that educational 'productivity' was lagging. Instructors already putting in between 50 and 65 hours a week during the teaching year should be required to process anywhere up to 25% more bodies. But the Association knew that the higher the quantity of bodies, the lower the quality of minds, and refused to budge (unlike most other Associations in the province).

As a tradeoff, salaries at FVC have fallen considerably behind the increase in cost of living over the past nine years. It should come as no great shock that this year's negotiations put a certain emphasis on regaining some proportion of our 1981 purchasing power. But salaries occupy only a few pages in the 100-page booklet which is the Association's current Collective Agreement with its employer. Much of it, and much of the collective effort of the employees, is devoted to procedures for fair hiring, evaluation, and termination; guarantees of academic freedom; provisions for professional development and educational leave; agreements on working hours, duties, and class sizes; and guidelines on health, safety, and technological change.

Quite apart from all these contractual matters, the Association has participated in

United Way and local Community Services Christmas campaigns, established scholarships and prizes, and founded one day care centre and sponsored another. We are in good health. Our biggest challenge lies in the future. It is hard enough to bring two or three hundred

employees together in a sense of shared purpose. With major growth projected for the College over the next few years, we have our task cut out for us. But the will is there, the tradition is strong, and the need has never been greater.

Graham Dowden